



## INSIDE INDIA

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### Charge D’Affaires Visits USAID Sites in Uttar Pradesh



Ambassador Burleigh meets with participants in USAID's health voucher program in Kanpur, UP. The program provides quality private sector reproductive and child health services at no cost to women in families living below the poverty line

Photo: USAID/Kerry Pelzman

During a recent visit to the state of Uttar Pradesh (UP), U.S. Charge D’Affaires, Ambassador Peter Burleigh, had the opportunity to visit two USAID program sites in Lucknow and Kanpur. In Lucknow, Ambassador Burleigh spent the afternoon at the USAID-funded Saathiya program. This program is designed to meet the reproductive health needs of young, low-income married couples in Lucknow by providing them with information, counseling, including a toll-free telephone helpline, and contraceptive products to help prevent unintended pregnancies, reduce sexually transmitted infections (STIs), and encourage the practice of birth spacing for new mothers. This program began as a pilot in urban Lucknow in 2007 and is now being scaled up to six other cities (four in UP and two in Uttarakhand).

Ambassador Burleigh started his visit with a tour of the Saathiya helpline offices, where he met with counselors and members of the medical associations involved in the program, including the Indian Medical Association, the National Integrated Medical Association, and the Lucknow Chemist Retail Association. The program is unique in its efforts to reach out to and form a network to involve a variety of service providers, from clinicians to traditional doctors and chemists as members and sources of information and services, for this population group. Later, he met with physician members of the Saathiya network, including the President of Lucknow Obstetrics &

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Gynecology Society, to learn about the role and contribution clinicians make to the program.

Following the visit in Lucknow, Ambassador Burleigh traveled to the city of Kanpur, where he learned about an innovative health care voucher project supported by USAID. In operation since November 2008, the voucher program provides quality private sector reproductive and child health (RCH) services at no cost to women in families living below the poverty line. Once their financial status is confirmed, program participants exchange a color-coded voucher for services at any one of nine accredited private hospitals in the urban areas of Kanpur Nagar. Services include: antenatal care; institutional delivery and post-natal care; family planning; treatment for reproductive tract infections/sexually transmitted infections; immunization; and diagnostic services.

The program currently operates in 368 urban slums. Ambassador Burleigh spoke with program participants and saw the tremendous and enthusiastic response from the community to an entertainment program that conveyed health messages while also generating new clients for the voucher program.

**Program participants enjoy a magic show with a public health message**



*Photos: USAID/Kerry Pelzman*

## **USAID Supports First Energy Efficient Lighting Center in South Asia**

Last week USAID, in collaboration with the Sustainable Energy Authority, Government of Sri Lanka, launched the first Regional Center for Energy Efficient Lighting (RCEEL) in Asia. The launch opened a two-day workshop in Colombo, Sri Lanka that brought together experts in lighting technology from the United States, Sri Lanka, and other countries in South Asia to promote energy efficient lighting technology, find innovative ways to apply new technologies, encourage new investment in research and development, and ultimately provide better access to electricity, a critical factor in economic development in the region.

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RCEEL is the first in a series of energy efficiency *Centers of Excellence* to be established in countries across South Asia. The Sri Lanka-based center will bring public and private enterprises together to focus on energy efficient lighting that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions, be more cost-effective, increase consumer accessibility to energy, and promote energy efficiency throughout the region.

USAID provided approximately \$800,000 of initial funding for the Regional Center through its South Asia Regional Initiative for Energy (SARI/E) program, based in India. SARI/E promotes energy security in South Asia in three activity areas: cross border energy trade, energy markets, and clean energy access partnerships. Through these activities, SARI/E supports more efficient use of resources in the region, mitigates the environmental impact of energy production, and increases regional access to energy resources. SARI/E countries include Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka.



Lighting the lamp at the RCEEL launch, Dr. Narendran Nadarajah, Associate Professor/Director of Research, LRC; from left: M M C Ferdinando, Secretary, Ministry of Power and Energy, Government of Sri Lanka; S. Padmanaban, Regional Program Director, USAID SARI/Energy; James R. Moore, Charg D'Affaires, U.S. Embassy, Sri Lanka; W D J Seneviratne, Hon. Minister of Power and Energy, GoSL; Dr. Krishan Deheragoda, Chairman, Sustainable Energy Authority; Ms. Rebecca Cohn, Mission Director, USAID/Colombo

The Lighting Research Center (LRC), a research center devoted to lighting located at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, New York, is the primary partner for the RCEEL. LRC will be providing technical knowledge, training, and guidance on RCEEL activities.

Speaking at the event, James Moore, U.S. Charge D'Affaires to Sri Lanka, said; "Providing access to electricity is a critical factor in supporting economic development throughout the region. By creating this regional center that will focus solely on the development of affordable, clean, and accessible sources of electricity, we can ensure that future generations receive the benefits of electricity, while at the same time protecting our natural environment."